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DOE FOR CAROLYN GAY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/09/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: YAR'ADUA'S AFRICAN TOUR

Classified By: Political Counselor Russell J. Hanks for reasons 1.4. (b & d).

¶1. (U) Governor Musa Umaru Yar'Adua embarked on an African tour this week. In Benin, Yar'Adua called for stronger cooperation between the two countries and assured resident Nigerians that his administration will continue and consolidate the Obasanjo Administration's economic reforms. In Togo, the president-elect pledged cooperation on energy and security issues. During a May 8 stop in Niger, Yar'Adua met with President Mamadou and pledged to improve border security. Yar'Adua arrived in South African May 9 for a meeting with President Mbeki. The president-elect brushed aside criticisms of the April polls, telling President Mbeki that Nigerian election results are always disputed by the losers, and indicating that he has tried to reach out to the opposition. On at least part of his tour, Governor Yar'Adua was accompanied by Dr. Bukola Saraki (Governor of Kwara), Chief James Ibori (Governor of Delta), Dr. Andy Uba (Governor-elect, Anambra), Nigerian Ambassador to the USA Dr. George Obiozor, and several prominent businessmen including Aliko Dangote.

¶2. (C) It is difficult to ascertain what other visits the president-elect has planned. Local media reports that Yar'Adua's African tour will continue with stops in Senegal, Algeria, and Libya later this week. The Egyptian Embassy in Abuja confirmed to Poloff that a trip to Cairo is in the works, but such a trip has never been mentioned in the press. According to Egyptian diplomats, visas have been issued to Yar'Adua and his party and President Mubarak will meet with Yar'Adua in Cairo, schedule permitting. However, the date of the trip has changed several times, and it may happen May 10 or 14 or 15. Poloffs have been trying a variety of sources to find out whether Governor Yar'Adua will be in Abuja the week of May 14. Sources (including Ambassador Obiozor and PDP National Secretary Ojo Maduekwe) are unable to confirm Yar'Adua's movements next week. We have heard rumors of possible travel to Russia, China, and Brazil before the inauguration.

¶3. (C) Governor Yar'Adua's travels may be limited due to his health (we believe he has only made day trips so far) and tainted by the deeply flawed April polls. Early speculation about the president-elect being received in Washington, London, and European capitals before May 29 has subsided, probably due to Western governments' distaste with the manner

in which Yar'Adua was "selected" to succeed Obasanjo. However, health permitting, trips to Cairo, Moscow, and Beijing may still be in the works, as those governments have fewer qualms about the manner in which Yar'Adua gained power and great desire access to Nigeria's resources and markets.

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